lume 13 no. 9 may, 1961

CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

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YOUR OPPORTUNITY

This summer the Council for Christian ocial Action offers not four, but five, pportunities for men and women, clergy d lay, in congregations, synods, associa- ons and conferences to become more adely acquainted with the facts and ssources needed to carry out effective cial action programs.

At Mill Valley, California and at lack Mountain, North Carolina, the rst Christian Social Action Institutes ill run simultaneously from June 19 to . The Mid-Western Institute will be ld at Lakeland College, Sheboygan, isconsin July 10 to 14, and the Eastern stitute at the Massachusetts Congrega- nal Conference Center at Framingham, lassachusetts July 24 to 28.

The features of the Institutes this year ill be two simultaneous study courses on e role of the clery and the role of the ity, respectively, in Christian Social ction. Topics to be considered in gen- al sessions are Justice and American bundance, Jewish-Christian Relations, ext Steps Toward Racial Equality, and e UN Confronts New Problems.

As in former years, there will be special orkshop sessions for local church lead- s, synod and conference leaders, and e leaders of women's groups. The ening sessions will be devoted to a con- lleration of the Coordinated Emphasis Christian Life and Work on "The amily and Rapid Social Change."

Miss R. Elizabeth Johns, the new pub-

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A REMINDER

The Council for Christian Social Action is eager to have the opinions and suggestions of churches and groups regarding the statements, printed in our March issue, for submission to the General Synod.

In order to be considered these reports must be in the hands of the Council before May 15. Synods and Conferences should submit their corresponding actions within five days of their meeting.

Anti-Communism: Hysterical or Constructive?

by Huber F. Klemme

The April issue of CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY reported the action of the General Board of the National Council of Churches in issuing a warning about the film, *Operation Abolition*, sponsored by the House Committee on Un-American Activities. Since that article was prepared and the issue went to press, inquiries and reports have continued to come in to the office of the Council for Christian Social Action, telling of inducements and pressures exercised in various communities to show the film, attempts to discredit all who question or oppose the film, and attacks particularly upon church and university groups inspired in part by the accusations and innuendos of the film.

In addition there have been an increasing number of reports of other emotional outbursts. Thus the Wichita (Kansas) *Sunday Eagle* reports that a film strip, "Communism on the Map," is going the rounds of civic clubs and church groups. Narrated by Dr. George S. Benson, of Harding College (Arkansas), it ostensibly describes the advance of Soviet tyranny but goes on to "prove that the Communists are about to take over countries like India, Canada, West Germany, France, and others. As the *Sunday Eagle* points out, not only does this film distort the facts by identifying Socialism with Communism and by ignoring the important steps which have been taken to block the threat of Communism by the Free World; it actually diverts its viewers from the improvement of our effective weapons against Communism by its exaggeration and emotionalism.

Another technique which is being used are so called anti-Communism schools conducted by a group known as the Christian Anti-Communist Crusade. This group also is known to engage in intemperate attacks upon the churches and any others who question its "strident line."

THE JOHN BIRCH SOCIETY

Judging by the number of inquiries, however, and the attention given this

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LOOK AT DEATH PENALTY, ECONOMIC PRACTICES

SOCIAL ACTION magazine climaxes a year of exciting issues with discussions of two lively current topics.

The April issue deals with "The Case Against Capital Punishment." In addition to an editorial on the topic, there are three major articles: "The Case Against Capital Punishment" by Donal E. J. McNamara; "Capital Punishment; a Christian Approach" by Charles S. Milligan; and "Vengeance and the Law" by Byron E. Eshelman.

In view of the great interest in this subject, church groups especially in certain states where an organized effort is already underway to abolish capital punishment, should find this material very helpful.

The May issue, the last before the summer break, will deal with the Economic Practices of the Churches. Based upon the recent study by the National Council of Churches on Economics and Ethics, this issue will contain a digest of the National Council findings with reference to Congregational Christian and Evangelical and Reformed churches, a discussion of the considerations which are basic for Christians in the employment practices of the churches, a case history of a church which has been studying its economic policies, and a guide to self-study which, it is hoped, many churches in our fellowship will want to use to examine themselves. Recent issues have dealt with such topics at anti-semitism, strategy for world economic development, racial equality, the church and community development, and the high cost of health.

Individual orders for any issue may be secured from the Council at 25c each for single copies, 10-99 at 20c, 100 or more copies at 15c. Still better, subscriptions may be had at $2.00 per year; five or more to one address at $1.50 each.

ANTI-COMMUNISM

(Continued from Page 1, Col. 3)

group in the press, one of the newest and fastest growing so-called anti-Communist organizations is the John Birch Society. This group was organized by Robert Welch, a retired businessman of Belmont, Massachusetts at a two day meeting in Indianapolis in December, 1958.

According to an article in the *Washington Post* for March 26, 1961, the twelve persons who attended have never been publicly identified. The Blue Book of the Society, copyrighted by Welch, states that the society is to have small local chapters consisting of ten to twenty "dedicated patriots." Leaders of the chapters are to be appointed by Welch or one of his officers. In this text the author condemns democracy as "merely a deceptive phrase, a weapon of demogoguery and a perennial fraud;" condescendingly admits that a republican form of government or organization has advantages under favorable circumstances but under less happy circumstances "lends itself too readily to infiltration, distortion and disruption;" and therefore calls for the organization of the society as a "monolithic body" operating under complete authoritarian control at all levels." Membership dues are $24 a year for men and 12 for women.

It is difficult to get a reasonable estimate as to the size of the group. Interviews by newspapers have brought forth claims of membership in all 50 states with chapters variously reported in from twenty to thirty-four states, including a large number of chapters near Boston and Chicago. Among the persons reported as members of the Society's National Council are three past presidents of the National Association of Manufacturers, Cola G. Parker, William J. Grede, and Ernest G. Swigert; T. Coleman Andrews, former Commissioner of Internal Revenue; Clarence Manion, former dean of the Notre Dame Law School; and Spruille Braden, one time United States diplomat.

The objective of the John Birch Society, as reported by Mr. Welch to the Indianapolis meeting, is simply "less government and more responsibility". The aim of the international Communist conspiracy is to take over the United States, and its method of doing this is to increase government, according to the Society. Among the evils which the Communists seek and the Society opposes, according to its own views, are a number of policies including increased defense and foreign spending which make for higher taxes, an unbalanced budget and inflation; increased governmental controls over prices, wages and material with the centralization of power in Washington; "worry about the horror of modern warfare so that the beauties of peace become attractive and lead the Nation to appeasement of the Communists." As reported by Mr. Clayton in the *Washington Post,* the Society believes that those who favor these ideas are either Communists or dupes of the Communists. Mr. Clayton simply reports. He does not seek to solve the mystery of who can escape the tar-brush if both appeasement and increased defense spending make one a Communist or a dupe.

It is this pronounced anti-government bias, coupled with the heady appeal of anti-Communism, which has enabled the Society to secure some following. It has attacked directly or by implication many leading figures in American life, not only liberals but respectable conservatives. Thus, every president from Franklin Roosevelt on is charged with being a Communist. Mr. Welch has stated that "Milton Eisenhower is a Communist and has been for 30 years," and that "Dwight Eisenhower is a dedicated, conscious agent of the Communist conspiracy." Both John Foster Dulles and Allen Dulles, head of the Central Intelligence Agency, are called Communists. Not only liberal Democratic Senators like Mike Mansfield and Senator Thomas C. Kuchel, a liberal Republican from California, but conservative Republicans such as Senator Milton R. Young of North Dakota have been vigorously attacked by Mr. Welch and his organization. As might be expected, Mr. Welch has attacked the American churches with the characteristic statement that "one third of the ministers are not true believers in the divine names or the divine history and divine teachings to which they give lip service," and some, he says, preach communism from their pulpits. The Marshall Plan, desegregation, the United Nations all come in for attack.

One of the stated objectives of the Society is to secure the impeachment of Chief Justice Warren, presumably because of his strong support of Constitutional liberties. Indeed, about the only outstanding public figures who have come off with favorable treatment by Mr. Welch are the late Senator Robert A. Taft (who incidentally was called a Communist by the extreme rightists of his time because he supported public housing), the late Senator Joseph McCarthy, and Mr. J. Edgar Hoover (who has made it clear that he does not endorse the Society or its activities).

Representatives in local chapters of the John Birch Society are reportedly active in promoting the use of the House Un-American Activities Committee film, "Operation Abolition." Retired Air Force Brigadier General William E. Lee, a "voluntary coordinator" for the Society, has charged Communist influence in the National Council of Churches. In reply nine Amarillo (Texas) ministers issued a statement challenging him to produce evidence of this charge.

The Northern California - Navada Council of Churches has cautioned members "to beware of the big lie tactics of Godless Communism and other forms of tyranny both on the right and the left."

The methods which the John Birch Society uses, to infiltrate PTA's and churches, to oppose social security and income tax laws as part of the Communist plot to take over the United States, and the general sowing of distrust and suspicion in communities have led to warnings by a number of persons and responsible organizations.

Former Vice President Richard Nixon, in a letter to the Los Angeles *Times,* writes: "I can well understand how many well-intentioned people, who are justifiably concerned about the threat which subversive groups present to our free institutions, tend to reach the conclusion that the only effective way to fight such organizations is to use the same evil methods they employ . . . But there could be no more dangerous fallacy. One of the most indelible lessons of human history is that those who adopt the doctrine that the end justifies the means inevitably find the means become the end."

Councils of Churches in Texas and in Washington State have issued their cautions also. The former quotes Mr. Benn R. Ezzell, editor of the Texas *Canadian Record,* who attended a meeting of the Society, as warning his readers that Mr. Welch "proposes, in essence, to establish an American dictatorship, with Robert Welch as its head."

UNCANNY PARALLEL

Having just completed a reading of William L. Shirer's *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich,* the present writer is impressed by several uncomfortable parallels between the movements fathered by Adolf Hitler and by Robert Welch. Each of them began with a secret organization. Each capitalized on the anxieties of an insecure people. Each was committed to an authoritarian structure. Each exploited, as long as it was useful, the name of a dead hero.

The John Birch Society takes its name from a conservative missionary in China who joined General Claire L. Chennault's forces and was killed 10 days after VJ day in a village held by the Communists who had cooperated in the war against Japan. Mr. Welch's exploitation of his name is based upon the claim that

he was a first "martyr" in the fight against communism. The Nazi government also utilized the name of a perhaps less savory character, Horst Wessell, as its forerunner

According to James Clayton, at the organization meeting of the John Birch Society Mr. Welch spoke approvingly of Senator Barry Goldwater but dismissed him as having no chance to supply the "dynamic overall leadership needed." Having eliminated other possibilities, Mr. Welch modestly suggested himself: "It is not because I want so frightening a responsibility and it is certainly not because I think that you gentlemen recognize any such quality of leadership in me as would make a happy choice for the role. It's just that I don't know where you, or all of us, are going to find anybody else to undertake the job."

Indeed, the confused character of its "program" would lead one to dismiss this movement as meaningless, were one not reminded that such movements have thrived in the past and while eventually they must go down they can do a great deal of damage while they last.

CONSTRUCTIVE ANTI-COMMUNISM

If the economic conservatism, the political (almost anti-political) reaction, the psychological insecurity, and the spiritual confusion on which such movements thrive, are not a constructive answer to the threat of Communism in our world, what approach offers hope?

Limitations of space do not permit us to develop an answer, except briefly to point out three principles which are ignored if not violated by those who support such irresponsible approaches as those outlined above:

1. To meet the threat of Communism in the world today, we must face up to the real problems of our world. The military, political, and economic threat of the communist powers is one such danger. But even more fundamental are the evils which they exploit to build up support: human need in economically impoverished countries, the past history and present experience of colonialism, racial discrimination and other denials of human rights in professedly democratic countries, the specter of poverty and unemployment in an age of fabulous productivity. We cannot ignore these problems, distort the truth by identifying responsible democratic government with irresponsible totalitarianism, disregard the calls for social and economic reform at home and abroad, turning our backs on the twentieth century, or sweeping its troubles under the rug.

2. We must take the offensive in our approach to social problems. Purely negative anti-Communism or anti anything else is not effective. It is a simple and temporarily successful trick to whip up hostility against "Communism," to identify the positions and people one does not like with this monster, and then fight against it. It takes a great deal more ingenuity to identify the factors which make for injustice and suffering in the world, which deny brotherhood and opportunity, and to create the conditions of *community*—the valid goal for which Communism and sterile anti-Communism alike offer only poor substitutes.

It is for this reason that the responsible arms and voices of the churches—the National Council of Churches, the General Synod of the United Church of Christ, the Council for Christian Social Action, and the corresponding bodies in other denominations—have persistently called for measures to further human welfare, brotherhood and justice. They have urged the abandonment of racial segregation in employment, education, and housing; protective legislation for migratory agricultural workers; responsible collective bargaining on the part of both labor and management; increased international programs of technical assistance and economic development; unflagging efforts to achieve controlled universal reduction of armaments. Yet, ironically, it is these very constructive measures—calculated to take the supports out from under Communist expansion—which have led to some of the most intemperate attacks upon the churches.

3. We must support, rather than shackle, the related goals of freedom and responsibility. One of our correspondents points out that the present attack upon freedom is hitting ministers and members of churches which have not been noted for strong social action programs. They are being smeared simply because they are related to a denomination which stands for something and through it to the National Council of Churches. In such a situation, perhaps, we can help one another to learn what it is to be the church and to exercise our Christian responsibility for the truest and fullest freedom, as responsible persons and churches working for a responsible society.

* * * *

NOTE: Extensive documentation regarding the activities of the John Birch Society will be found in the *Congressional Record* for Tuesday, March 28, 1961, pages 4657 to 4663. The helpfulness of this material, particularly the articles by James E. Clayton and Marquis Childs in the *Washington Post* for March 26 and March 28, respectively, is gratefully acknowledged.

News From the Field

This spring the Fall City Regional Youth Federation, composed of twenty-four churches (23 Evangelical and Reformed, 1 Congregational Christian) in the Louisville area, planned a Roller Skating party at a local amusement park. When the group learned that the park had a policy of racial segregation, it cancelled the party since the policy "violates the purpose of our Federation and the Christian principles of social action."

* * * *

The Eau Claire Association of Congregational Christian Churches held a Social Action Institute on February 19. Subject was "The Family in a Changing Society," with Dr. William H. Genne, of the National Council of Churches Department of Family Life, as the speaker. Discussion groups dealt with The Family and its Community, The Family and its Work and Money, and Creativity within the Family.

* * * *

The Christian Social Action Committee of the First Congregational Church of Washington, D. C., defying the idea that people in Washington are not interested in the problems of government, sponsored a discussion of "Next Steps in Disarmament", conducted by Raymond E. Wilson of the Friends' Committee on National Legislation. To accommodate the congregation's scattered membership it sponsored discussion groups in various parts of the city.

It urged the District Commissioners to establish a Central Relocation Agency to assist dislocated families. A charge account with a leading department store was cancelled until it lifted its ban on serving Negroes in its lunch rooms. A refugee student in Jordan was supported and a Guest Exchange program set up with People's Congregational Church. Women of the church studied the booklet, "Employed Women and the Church," and have asked the committee to investigate the need of a nursing service.

* * * *

Center Church, Huntington, Long Island, has a Board of Social Action which reports successful *summertime* discussion groups. It participated in conferences conducted by the Suffolk County Migrant Labor and Slum Clearance Advisory Committee and cooperated with the Huntington Township Committee on Human Relations to bring housing discrimination to the attention of the community. In connection with the latter, Mr. James Tillman, director of CCSA's fair housing program in Minneapolis, spoke to a workshop and in a Sunday service.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GUIDE AVAILABLE

The Committee on Rural Issues, established by the Council for Christian Social Action and the Town and Country Church Department of the United Church of Christ, has issued a guide for planning one day conferences on the Church and Small Community Redevelopment.

An outgrowth of the Consultation on the Church and Community Development held at Lisle, New York in November, 1960, this mimeographed outline with suggestions for program planning has been prepared by the Reverend Shirley E. Greene, secretary of Town and Country Church. A list of available resources is included.

Single copies of this program may be secured on request from either the Council for Christian Social Action (New York and Cleveland) or from the Town and Country Department (St. Louis or Chicago).

SAVE THESE DATES

The Council for Christian Social Action announces that its annual World Order and United Nations Seminar will take place in New York City October 17 to 19, 1961. The Seminar will begin at 9:00 A.M. on Tuesday and close at 1:00 P.M. on Thursday.

More detailed information will be mailed with the September issue of CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY, or may be secured on request from the Reverend Herman F. Reissig, International Relations Secretary, Council for Christian Social Action, 289 Park Avenue South, New York 10, New York.

CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

MAY, 1961

News and Program Service of the Council for Christian Social Action of the United Church of Christ

Ray Gibbons, Director

Huber F. Klemme, Associate Director and Editor

Sent free to pastors and social action committee chairmen. Group subscriptions, 10 or more to one address, 50 cents each. Individual subscriptions, $2 per year with SOCIAL ACTION upon request.

General communications and orders from Evangelical and Reformed churches should be addressed to the Editor, Council for Christian Social Action, 2969 W. 25th St., Cleveland 13, Ohio.

Congregational Christians should order from Council for Christian Social Action, 289 Park Avenue South, New York 10, N. Y.

The Council for Christian Social Action unites the work of the Council for Social Action of the Congregational Christian Churches and the Commission on Christian Social Action of the Evangelical and Reformed Church.

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1961 STUDY TOURS

Attention is again called to the CCSA's 1961 Study Tours: one to Africa (June 20-August 9), and one to the Caribbean (July 24-August 13).

Both Study Tours will provide opportunities to observe conditions and to talk with leaders in two areas which are very much in the news.

The cost of the Africa tour is $2500. Inquiries and applications should be sent before May 1 to Rev. Herman F. Reissig, tour director, at 289 Park Avenue South, New York 10, N. Y.

The cost of the Caribbean tour is $684. This includes all tour expenses beginning in New York on July 24 and concluding in Miami, Florida, on August 13. Inquiries and applications should be sent before May 20 to Rev. F. Nelsen Schlegel, tour director, 2969 West 25th Street, Cleveland 13, Ohio.

A matter of special interest is the fact that Dr. Samuel Guy Inman, distinguished expert on Latin American affairs, will accompany the Caribbean Tour as program advisor. Dr. Inman has many friends and former associates at a number of the places to be visited, and will be able to offer much information not otherwise available to travelers in the West Indies.

It will be appreciated if readers of CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY will share this information with persons in their parishes who have serious social concerns and who might benefit from participation.

YOUR OPPORTUNITY

(Continued from Page 1, Col. 1)

lications secretary and editor of SOCIAL ACTION magazine, will be the program coordinator for these Institutes. In addition to members of the CCSA staff, national and regional specialists will be called upon for leadership.

This year a special Christian Social Action Institute for youth has been announced. This will be held at Defiance College, Defiance, Ohio, August 11 to 15. This is a joint project of the Council for Christian Social Action, the Pilgrim Fellowship, and the Youth Fellowship.

In addition to the above opportunities, it is hoped that many will take advantage of the 18th annual Race Relations Institute to be held at Fisk University at Nashville, Tennessee June 19 to July 1.

Information concerning the above programs can be secured from either the New York or the Cleveland office of the Council for Christian Social Action.

SOCIAL ACTION CALENDAR

June 19-23—Southern Christian Social Action Institute, Blue Ridge Assembly Grounds, Black Mountain, North Carolina.

June 19-23—West Coast Christian Social Action Institute, White Memorial Conference Center, Mill Valley, California.

June 19 - July 1—Race Relations Institute, Fisk University, Nashville, Tennessee.

June 20 - August 9—Africa Study Tour. Information from Rev. Herman F. Reissig, 289 Park Avenue South, New York 10, New York.

July 10-14—Midwestern Christian Social Action Institute, Lakeland College, Sheboygan, Wisconsin.

July 24-28—Eastern Christian Social Action Institute, Congregational Christian Conference Center, Framingham, Massachusetts.

July 24 - August 13—Caribbean Study Tour. Information from Rev. F. Nelsen Schlegel, 2969 West 25th St., Cleveland 13, Ohio.

August 11-15—Youth Christian Social Action Institute, Defiance College, Defiance, Ohio. Information from Mr. Henry Tani, 1505 Race St., Philadelphia, Pa.

September 3—Labor Sunday.

September 12-14—Council for Christian Social Action, Washington, D. C.

October 17-19—World Order—United Nations Seminar, New York, N. Y.

October 23-27—National Study Conference on the Churches and Social Welfare, Cleveland, Ohio.

CONNALLY AMENDMENT

A new effort will be made, probably not until 1962, to repeal the Connally Amendment to the U. S. treaty of membership in the World Court. The CCSA, like the National Council of Churches and hundreds of other American organizations, favors repeal. Persons and groups wishing information on this issue should write to the Committee for Effective Use of the International Court, 36 West 44th Street, New York 36, N. Y. Ask for a packet of materials. An excellent booklet, "Questions and Answers on the World Court and the United States," is published by the World Rule of Law Center, Duke University Durham, North Carolina. There is, apparently, no charge.

CORRECTION

We regret that an error appeared in the text of the resolution adopted by the General Board of the National Council of Churches, as reported in the April issue of CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY.

In the preamble of this resolution in the paragraph numbered 2, the words should be "reaffirms its opposition to and repugnance for Communism."